

Message Text

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM GENEVA DATED MARCH 11, 1977 SENT
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TAGS: ICRC

SUBJECT: ICRC SEEKS INCREASE IN GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS; COMMENTS
ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS

1. INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)
PRESIDENT ALEXANDRE HAY ASKED MINISTER-COUNSELOR TO
CALL MARCH 4 TO BE INFORMED ON HAY'S RECENT MEETING
WITH FRG CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT. (ALSO PRESENT
AT SESSION WERE HAY'S NEWLY APPOINTED DEPUTY, RICHARD
PESTALOZZI, ICRC DELEGATE GENERAL FOR NORTH AMERICA
AND EUROPE, MELCHIOR BORSINGER, AND MISSION HUMAN
AFFAIRS COUNSELOR.) HAY REPORTED THAT HE HAD
RECENTLY CALLED UPON BOTH FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD
D'ESTAING AND GERMAN CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT,
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TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF AS THE NEW ICRC PRESIDENT, AND
TO MAKE A PERSONAL APPEAL FOR INCREASED NATIONAL
CONTRIBUTIONS TO ICRC'S BUDGET. HE EMPHASIZED
THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT MEETING WAS NOT TO
SOLICIT ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM THE UNITED STATES, AND
TOOK THE OCCASION TO EXPRESS WARM THANKS FOR OUR
GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION TO ICRC'S CURRENT REGULAR

BUDGET. RATHER, HE SAID, HE WISHED TO NOTIFY PRESIDENT CARTER, THROUGH THE MISSION, OF CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S REACTION TO HIS INTERVENTION. IN BRIEF, HAY REPORTED THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT WAS SURPRISED AT THE RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL OF GERMAN'S PRESENT CONTRIBUTION TO ICRC (300,000 SWISS FRANCS), BUT CONCERNED AT THE SAME TIME THAT IT WAS THE SECOND-RANKING CONTRIBUTOR AFTER THE UNITED STATES. (OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS LISTED BY HAY WERE FRANCE AT 180,000 SWISS FRANCS, UK AT 150,000 SWISS FRANCS, AND THE USSR, NOTHING AT ALL.) ACCORDINGLY, HAY SAID, SCHMIDT HAD TOLD HIM THAT HE PLANNED TO READ A THREE-MINUTE NOTE AT THE LONDON SUMMIT CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD HIGHLIGHT THIS MATTER AND URGE THE JOINT EFFORTS OF THE CHIEFS OF STATE TOWARD INCREASING THE LEVELS OF NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ICRC. HAY REEMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS NOT INFORMING US OF THIS DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO SEEK AN INCREASED U.S. CONTRIBUTION, BUT FELT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD BE ALERTED TO THE CHANCELLOR'S INTENTION IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING.

2. SOME DISCUSSION FOLLOWED AS TO THE INCREASING ECONOMIC BURDENS CONFRONTING ICRC IN A PERIOD OF INFLATION AND RISING COSTS WORLDWIDE. HAY FELT THAT, WHILE IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE AND JUST THAT ICRC SHOULD BE SUPPORTED AT ROUGHLY 50 PERCENT OF ITS BUDGET BY THE SWISS GOVERNMENT (7.5 MILLION SWISS FRANCS), AT THE SAME TIME, TO PRESERVE ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRULY INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER, HE BELIEVED STRONGLY THAT THE REMAINDER SHOULD BE MAINTAINED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND SOCIETIES. HE STATED THAT, ALTHOUGH ICRC STILL HAD SOME RESERVES REMAINING, THESE WERE IN A PRECARIOUS STATE AND COULD BE WIPED OUT WERE THERE A SINGLE MAJOR EMERGENCY DEMANDING ICRC'S ACTION. THEREFORE, THE CURRENT NEED TO SEEK INCREASED ASSISTANCE FROM FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

3. HAY DEPARTED MARCH 5 FOR TEHRAN AND NEW DELHI, THE LATTER TO ATTEND A REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES. IN TEHRAN, WHERE HE WILL MEET WITH THE SHAH, HE IS TO RESPOND TO THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT TO AN ICRC APPEAL MADE IN 1971 THAT IT BE PERMITTED TO VISIT PRISONERS IN IRANIAN JAILS. HAY FELT THAT THIS WAS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD, AND JUDGED THAT THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT HAD FELT FORCED TO THIS CONCESSION AS AN IMAGE-PRESERVING GESTURE IN THE

FACE OF WORLDWIDE HUMAN RIGHTS' PRESSURES.

4. HE ALSO DESCRIBED HIS RECENT MEETING WITH CHILEAN PRESIDENT PINOCHET, IN WHICH HE PRESENTED THE PRESIDENT A LIST OF 1,000 NAMES OF MISSING CHILEANS WITH A REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDE AN ACCOUNTING FOR THEM. HE DESCRIBED PINOCHET'S REACTION AS EXPLOSIVE AND FELT AT THE TIME THAT

ICRC WOULD HEAR NOTHING FURTHER FROM THE GOC. TO HIS SURPRISE, HOWEVER, THE CHILEAN MISSION HERE HAS SINCE DELIVERED A FIRST ACCOUNTING OF SOME 100 OF THESE NAMES WITH THE PROMISE OF MORE TO COME. THIS, IN HAY'S VIEW, MAY BE A CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL SIGN OF SOME MODERATION OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S RIGID STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. HOWEVER, HE WENT ON TO EXPRESS CONSIDERABLE PESSIMISM AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONCERNS RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAT ENTIRE AREA, NOTABLY INCLUDING ARGENTINA, URUGUAY, AND PARAGUAY.

5. FINALLY, HAY EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT AT SOME APPROPRIATE FUTURE TIME HE MIGHT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, AS HIS PREDECESSORS HAVE WITH FORMER AMERICAN PRESIDENTS. RECOGNIZING THE MANY OBLIGATIONS CONFRONTING THE PRESIDENT THIS YEAR, AND HIS OWN CROWDED CALENDAR, HAY FELT SUCH A MEETING COULD PROBABLY NOT BE SCHEDULED UNTIL 1978, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD OF COURSE BE AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME DESIRED BY PRESIDENT, INCLUDING A 1977 DATE.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH U.S. GOVERNMENT IS BY ALL ODDS MOST GENEROUS NON-SWISS CONTRIBUTOR TO ICRC'S REGULAR AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS, WE MIGHT, RECOGNIZING THE FACTS OF INFLATIONARY PRESSURES, AND RISING COSTS AND DEMANDS UPON THE ICRC, GIVE CONSIDERATION TO AT LEAST marginally INCREASING OUR CONTRIBUTION. WERE THIS TO BE ANNOUNCED AT THE LONDON SUMMIT IN REACTION TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT (IF THIS IS, IN FACT, MADE; A SUMMIT SEEMS A STRANGE SETTING FOR SUCH AN APPEAL), IT MIGHT WELL HAVE A SALUTARY AND PRODUCTIVE EFFECT UPON THE OTHER CHIEFS OF STATE PRESENT. CATTO UNQUOTE VANCE

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